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ALSTROEMERIAS

or

Peruvian Lilies

THE increasing popularity of the Alstroemerias with the gardening public is mainly due to the ease of their cultivation, wide range of color, excellent keeping quality as a cut flower, and freedom from disease and pests.

The culture begins with the selection of a sunny, sheltered, and well drained location where they may remain undisturbed for years. It is often fatal to transplant them after they are established. Plant them in the fall 6 or 8 inches deep in a soil well enriched with humus, leafmold or fertilized compost. They seem to prefer a slightly acid soil, which, although well drained remains cool and well watered until after their blooming season during the last of June to the middle of July. The tops come up during the winter and will withstand light frost but if the weather should become severe the tubers should be protected against freezing by a mulch of straw, fern tops or other packing material.

The color range of the flowers is as near unlimited as any flower in cultivation, running through the pastel shades to creamy yellows, and from light pinks to striking reds. All flowers regardless of color have a rich golden yellow splotch in the center of each upper petal, which is penciled with a harmonizing shade of maroon. When cut and placed into a vase these flowers will last ten days to two weeks. They are excellent for corsage work.

Among the desirable characteristics of these plants is their freedom from disease and insects. Slugs alone are the outstanding pests. Occasionally aphids will become troublesome, especially if grown indoors.

DESCRIPTION OF SPECIES

- A. *aurantiaca*—Hardy, provided the tubers do not freeze. Two to three feet high. Foliage evergreen on a graceful stem. Flowers a deep orange. Blooming size tubers \$1.50 per dozen.
- A. *lutea*—Same as the above except the flowers a clear buttercup yellow. Blooming size tubers \$1.50 per dozen.
- A. *chilensis*—Hardy. Three to five feet. Flowers in pleasing shades of near white, creamy yellows, pinks and reds. Mixed colors. Blooming size tubers \$1.00 per dozen. Special colors in six inch pots, \$1.00.
- A. *Ligtu*—Have three types under this name and am not certain that they are the Ligtu of Father Feuillet. I am not offering them under this name until I am certain that they are the true A. Ligtu.
- A. *Ligtu, var. Angustifolia*—A beautiful clear pink. Not guaranteed to be the true angustifolia of Herbert. Single tuber \$1.00.
- A. *pulchra, (tricolor)*—Hardy. 14 to 16 inches. Umbels with six to eight white flowers flushed with a pleasing shade of purple. Two upright petals with a rosy purple splotch on the upper half with a streak of golden yellow across it. Tubers, \$1.00 a dozen.



Alstroemeria Ligtu (?)

Pen sketch by Mr. J. M. Shull

- A. *psittacina (pulchrella)*—The parrot. Half hardy here at Seattle. Flowers tubular. Petals very dark red at the base, shading into a bright red and changing to a vivid green at the tip ends. Dozen \$1.00.
- A. *brasiliensis*—Half hardy here. Similar to above except flowers a rich, deep wine. Scarce. Dozen \$1.50.
- A. *haemantha*—Hardy. Two to three feet. Similar to A. chilensis. Flowers a striking orange red. Leaves more ciliate. Upright sepal reflexed. Single tuber, \$1.00.
- A. *pelegrina*—Lily of the Incas. Tender. Eighteen inches. Flowers open, two inches wide, white flushed with lavender. Petals shouldered and tipped with lavender. Small blooming size tubers, \$1.00 per dozen.
- A. *pelegrina, alba*—Same as the above except flowers white faintly flushed with chartreuse green and a prominent golden splotch. Small tubers, \$1.00 per dozen.
- A. *nemorosa*—Very tender. Flowers tubular, orange spotted with black. Stems nude, leaves clustered near the summit. Very rare. Single tuber, \$5.00.

The study of the Alstroemerias is not complete and will not be for several years. The past several years have been spent in translating the literature concerning them and much confusion still exists about the Species A. Ligtu. The growing of these flowers is my hobby, and it has been an interesting and absorbing avocation.

Grown by

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Department of Agriculture

